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ABSTRACT

This annotated bibliography lists 25 materials that focus on older adult literacy needs, issues, and programs. It includes current Canadian literature in the area, as well as pertinent U.S. documents. The materials cover topics ranging from older adult literacy program development and learning resources to selected titles of general literacy materials. The contents are divided into three sections: (1) older adult literacy resource materials, with a summary of contents listed alphabetically by author; (2) general resource materials; and (3) information on where to obtain the documents. (KC)

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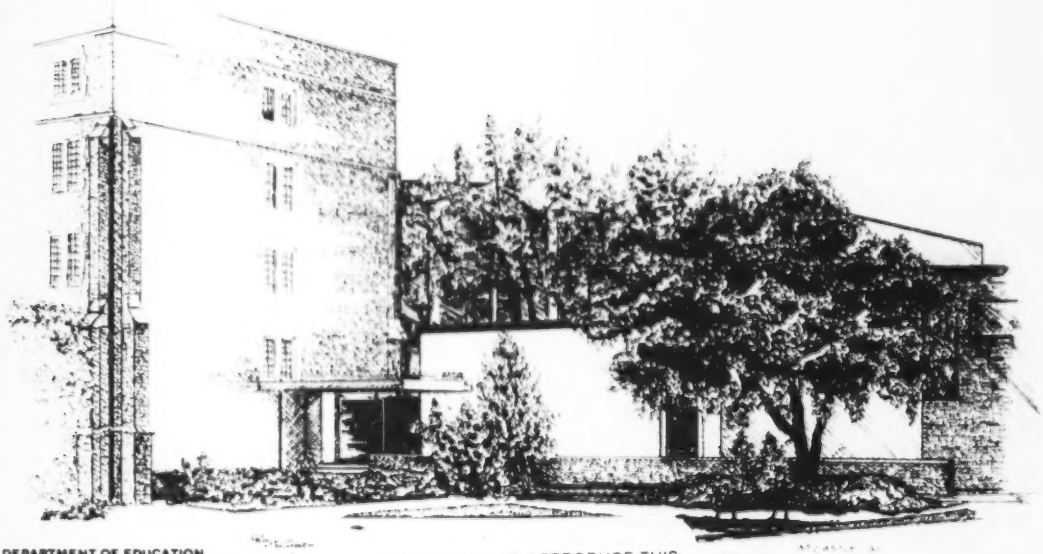
OLDER ADULT LITERACY RESOURCE MATERIALS
AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY



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OLDER ADULT LITERACY RESOURCE MATERIALS

AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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INTRODUCTION

The goals of the Older Adult Literacy Project are to raise awareness of the literacy needs of seniors, and to provide older adult literacy resources. The development of this annotated bibliography is a step in that direction.

The bibliography is a list of materials which focus on older adult literacy needs, issues, and programming. It includes current Canadian literature in the area, as well as pertinent American documents. The materials cover topics ranging from older adult literacy program development and learning resources, to selected titles of general literacy materials.

The contents are divided into three sections: older adult literacy resource materials, with a summary of contents, listed alphabetically by author, general resource materials, and information on where to obtain the documents.

This bibliography will be helpful to literacy program coordinators, tutors, older adult learners, members of seniors' organizations, adult educators, and anyone interested in older adult literacy.

SECTION ONE

OLDER ADULT LITERACY RESOURCE MATERIALS

Appleton, H., & Dirk, J. (1992). Tips for tutoring learners 50 years and better: A manual for new tutors. Medicine Hat, Alberta: Medicine Hat College, Division of Community Education and Program Development.

This booklet, based on the experiences of the "Something Special for Seniors" literacy project, provides information to tutors about what to expect when tutoring older adults, and hints on how to improve tutoring skills in the areas of reading, writing, arithmetic, and spelling. This resource addresses the special needs and concerns of older adult literacy learners and tutors. A tutoring material resource list is also included.

Available from the producer: Something Special for Seniors Program, Medicine Hat College

Askov, E.N., & Forlizzi, L.A. (1989). Assessing the educational needs and interests of students enrolled in a reading program at a center for older adults. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University, University ParK. Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy.

This was a pilot study which assessed the educational interests and needs of a group of older, low-literate adults. The eventual goal of undertaking the study was to develop computer-assisted literacy programs specifically designed for older adults. Results of the study indicated that (1) the subjects exhibited a wide variety of skill levels and had diverse needs; (2) a majority had basic decoding skills and wanted to develop higher-order skills; (3) many expressed interest in reading materials related to leisure interests; (4) most usually read a wide variety of materials at some level; (5) their writing needs were taken care of by others close to them; (6) the majority of subjects expressed a desire for self-improvement and self-sufficiency; and (7) the tutor's role was crucial in providing motivation and encouragement. The survey instrument, and the explanation of the study (which was read to the subjects), are attached.

Available from the ERIC document reproduction service No. ED316832

Brown, H.W. (1989). Literacy training and older Americans. Washington: American Association of Retired Persons.

Illiteracy is a serious problem for older people, particularly for older minorities. Numerous literacy programs are funded by various levels of government. However, few of these programs reach older adults and fewer still serve older minorities. Based on a review of current literacy efforts in the United States, this document outlines future options which include: (1) development of literacy training programs designed for the older population, closely linking literacy and occupational skills training; (2) improvement of teaching techniques

and methods to meet the learning needs of older minorities; and (3) promotion of coalition building between organizations serving older minorities and literacy providers to coordinate educational, employment, and supportive services for older adults.

Available from the ERIC document reproduction service No. ED317795

Cantwell, H. (1993). Law/literacy teaching series. Medicine Hat, Alberta: Something Special for Seniors Program, Medicine Hat College, Division of Community Education and Program Development.

The law/literacy teaching series consists of five modules used for instruction purposes in the "Something Special for Seniors" program: Wills, When Your Spouse Dies, Living Wills, Power of Attorney, and Living Common Law. Each module has three segments. The story segment is intended to spark the learner's interest. The second segment presents information on the topic in a factual and easily understood way. The reading exercise segment uses the story and information to enhance learning. The primary purpose of the series is to teach reading concepts while imparting basic legal information. Each module contains legal information, tutor information and exercises, and learner lessons.

Available from the producer: Something Special for Seniors Program, Medicine Hat College

Fisher, J.C. (1987). The literacy level among older adults: Is it a problem? Adult Literacy and Basic Education, 11(1), 41-50.

This document examines the low level of participation in adult basic education by older adults and the impact of illiteracy on older adults. Also discussed are the role of reading among this population, the adequacy of commonly used definitions and measures of literacy for older adults, and recommendations for research and practice.

Available from the University of Regina Education Library

Goldgrab, S. (1991). Older adults and literacy. In Issues in adult literacy and basic education: Canada (pp. 152-158). Toronto, Ontario: Department of Adult Education, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

This article looks at the experiences of teachers and students in literacy classes offered through the Separate School Board in Sudbury, Ontario. Many of the students are adults age 54 and older. The author outlines the barriers these students overcame to take part in the classes. Some of the elements which encourage the seniors to continue are also mentioned. Unlike other adult basic literacy programs, the Sudbury program has been successful in attracting and tutoring older adults in a classroom setting with a mixed age group.

Available through the Interlibrary loans

Gourlay, G. (1993). Leading the way to literacy: A how-to handbook for seniors' literacy groups. Grande Prairie, Alberta: Seniors Helping Seniors, the Reading Network, Grande Prairie Regional College.

This how-to manual is based on the logic and formation of the "Seniors Helping Seniors" project administered through the Grand Prairie Regional College, Grande Prairie, Alberta. It explains how the program was initiated, developed, and administered. By tracing the progress of the project, this document is meant to help other programs and organizations (current and potential) to develop literacy programs for and with older adults. The handbook maintains that although seniors have been active participants in many mainstream adult basic literacy projects, the needs of older adult literacy learners could be met more effectively by developing peer tutoring programs solely for older adults.

Available from the producer: The Seniors Helping Seniors Project, Grande Prairie Regional College

Jacobs, B., & Ventura-Merkel, C. (1986). Organizing a literacy program for older adults: Literacy education for the elderly project. Washington: National Council on the Aging, Inc.

This guide describes a model for a community-based literacy program for older adults that utilizes older adults as tutors. A step-by-step process is provided to help program sponsors implement literacy education for older adults. Chapters cover: an overview of the problem of illiteracy and older adults; the planning of a literacy program for older adults; direct service management issues -- tutor and peer support recruitment, volunteer training, and older student recruitment; strategies for success; descriptions and results of an in-depth study of 27 sites that participated in the project; and an annotated listing of organizations. Sample project materials are appended.

Available from the ERIC document reproduction service No. ED286001

Jacobs, B., & Ventura-Merkel, C. (1986). Tutoring older adults in literacy programs: Literacy education for the elderly project. Washington: National Council on the Aging, Inc.

This booklet is designed to sensitize volunteer literacy tutors to the special needs and interests of older adult literacy learners. It provides useful tips for creating rewarding learning experiences: gaining the students' trust, making learning goal-oriented, adapting one's teaching style, keeping motivation high, meeting students' needs, evaluating personal goals regularly, relying on peer supports, selecting appropriate teaching materials, using learning contracts, and being alert to learning problems. A chart correlates learning needs with ways to help meet them. The final section addresses building confidence, broadening horizons, and expanding skills.

Available from the ERIC document reproduction service No. ED286002

Lothian, T., & Jones, S. (1991). Something special for seniors: An evaluation report on tutor training in an adult literacy program for seniors. Ottawa: Carleton University, Centre for the Study of Adult Literacy.

This report presents the findings of the initial evaluation of "Something Special for Seniors", a literacy program designed to meet the needs of older Canadians, by providing innovative literacy programming in non-traditional settings. The Centre for the Study of Adult Literacy at Carleton University undertook this evaluation on behalf of One Voice - Canadian Seniors Network, and Medicine Hat College, the host of the program. The report summarizes what was accomplished during the first tutor training session, and what can be learned from it. Also included are numerous appendices of material used in the "Something Special for Seniors" program and in the tutor training workshop.

Available from the producer: Centre for the Study of Adult Literacy, Carleton University or from the Something Special for Seniors Program

Mullan, D. (1992). Saskatchewan older adult literacy survey: Final report. Regina, Saskatchewan: Seniors' Education Centre, University Extension, University of Regina.

This report presents the results of research conducted with the participation of 14 literacy program coordinators in Saskatchewan's regional colleges, public libraries, and technical institutes. The report outlines the goals, objectives, scope, and methodology of the survey. A summary of findings covers: the roots of illiteracy, demographics, reasons for participation, barriers to older adult participation in current literacy programs, strategies to reach potential older adult literacy learners, learning resources, and how to meet the needs of older adult literacy learners. The author concluded that little had been done in Saskatchewan to explore available resources and the learning needs of seniors who have little or no reading and writing skills. The report contains recommendations, a bibliography, and resources appendices. This is the first attempt to examine older adult literacy needs in Saskatchewan.

Available from the producer: Seniors' Education Centre, University of Regina, University Extension

National Council on the Aging. (1987). Combating illiteracy among the elderly: A cost effective strategy. Final project report. Washington: National Council on the Aging, Inc.

The Literacy Education for the Elderly Project (LEEP) was designed to target literacy education to the older adult. This final report provides a description and the results of the project. The objectives of the two-year program, established in 27 sites in the United States, were to: (1) network senior services and organizations with volunteer adult literacy programs; (2) recruit and train older adults as volunteer tutors and peer supports; (3) deliver literacy education to older adults in non-traditional sites such as senior centres, senior housing, and

churches; and (4) provide administrators, tutors and trainers with materials on how to organize a literacy program to address the special learning needs of older adults. Appendices include a list of project advisory committee members, a list of demonstration sites, case studies of sites, a follow-up survey, and reproductions of articles from various periodicals describing the program.

Available from the ERIC document reproduction service No. ED300757

One Voice. (1990). **Learning -- That's Life! conference report and recommendations. A national conference on literacy and older Canadians.** **Ottawa: One Voice, the Canadian Seniors Network, Inc.**

This conference report covers the proceedings of the "One Voice" conference that brought together seniors, researchers, literacy project leaders, educators, community agencies, and policy makers to examine the senior literacy problem and its solutions. The historical, political, and cultural sources of older adult literacy problems are discussed. The report concludes that the literacy problems of older Canadians are highly complex and extensive. Community adult literacy classes, personal visits to care centers to share stories and discuss current events, and stressing the important role of community libraries are listed as solutions to low literacy. The common ingredients for the success of any program are described as: a friendly, informal, accessible location, peer tutors, and input from seniors. The report concludes that seniors should take the lead in developing literacy education for older Canadians. Recommendations and conference participants are listed in appendices to the report.

Available from One Voice or ERIC document reproduction service No. ED350420

One Voice. (1991). **A national literacy strategy for older Canadians.** **Ottawa: One Voice, the Canadian Seniors Network, Inc.**

This document includes a rationale, objectives, and a 3-year start-up plan for working toward the goal of "a society where low literacy is not a barrier to full participation of seniors." Additional background information is provided on literacy and seniors. The conclusion calls for One Voice to take the lead in promoting literacy for older Canadians. Also included are a list of task force members, draft terms of reference for the plan, and lists of task force recommendations and publications on older adult literacy.

Available from One Voice or ERIC document reproduction service No. ED350419

Price, M. (1988). I can read...at last! Trainer's guide: A training workshop for literacy tutors of the elderly. Syracuse, New York: Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc.

Current adult literacy programs in the United States are not meeting the needs of older adults with low literacy skills. New approaches need to be considered. The "I Can Read... At Last!" program is one such approach. The program is designed to support those literacy groups choosing to add a special focus project for older adults. Program material consists of a trainer's guide and accompanying slide presentation. The material, for use in a workshop setting, offers specific information about how older adults learn and the unique needs they may have. The guide also suggests ways for meeting those needs. Workshop content is primarily aimed at literacy tutors, but can be used for public awareness purposes.

Available from the producer: Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc.

Rutherford, J. (1989). Illiteracy and older Canadians: An unrecognized problem. A literature review. Ottawa: One Voice, the Canadian Seniors Network. Inc.

Sixty-four percent of older Canadians age 55-69 have low levels of functional literacy that lead to problems with everyday life. However, older people are the smallest group represented in adult basic literacy programs. This literature review examines the problem and the reasons why older adults are under-represented. The review covers: a profile of the illiterate older adult; level of interest and ability to acquire literacy in later years; deterrents to older adult participation in existing literacy programs; different educational needs of older and younger adults; design considerations for a literacy program for the elderly; groups with special needs within the illiterate elderly; literacy programs for seniors; and suggestions for further study and action. References are listed at the end of the document.

Available from the producer: One Voice or the ERIC document reproduction service No. ED350421

Seniors Helping Seniors Project. (1992). An evaluation report on the Seniors Helping Seniors Project. Grande Prairie, Alberta: The Reading Network, Grande Prairie Regional College.

This report is a thorough review of the first year of operation of the "Seniors Helping Seniors" literacy project, covering areas such as staffing, volunteer and learner recruitment, student assessment, tutor training, profile of learners, and funding. As a mid-point evaluation, emphasis was given to future strategies, recommendations, and processes. The report concludes that the "Seniors Helping Seniors" literacy project is on track and should continue with its current strategies. It suggests strengthening some program areas, and includes details of the evaluation instruments used, and the tutor training manual.

Available from the producer: The Seniors Helping Seniors Project

Weinstein-Shr, G., & Lewis, N.E. (1989). Language, literacy, and the older refugee in America: Research agenda for the 90s.

As the large immigrant/refugee population in the United States ages, educational institutions, workplaces, and social services are increasingly challenged to meet the needs of these elders. The ability to cope with financial insecurities, health difficulties, loneliness and isolation, stresses in the family and community, is linked to language ability and language use. This document examines the research required and argues that, in order to meet the needs of uprooted elders, it is necessary to address the following three questions: (1) What are the functions of language and literacy (both English and native languages) in the lives of uprooted elders? (2) How do older refugees/immigrants solve problems requiring English language skills? (3) What is the significance of language in the negotiation of new roles and relationships? The authors maintain that systematic qualitative research is the best way to examine these questions, and propose an appropriate theoretical framework.

Available from the ERIC document reproduction service No. ED313928

Williamson, B. (1991). Literacy for older adults. Grande Prairie, Alberta: Adult Development Department, The Reading Network, Grande Prairie Regional College.

This document discusses the literacy needs of older adults, 55 years and over, who live in the province of Alberta. The report includes: a literature review; a summary of recent literacy research; an analysis of past, present, and future demographic trends; and a discussion of the special social and physical needs of older adults wishing to participate in educational programming. The author concludes that older Albertans have a greater need for literacy programming than the general population and are not being adequately served through existing programs. In light of the demographic trend toward increasing numbers of older adults, the author anticipates an increased demand for senior-specific literacy services in the future. A bibliography is provided at the end of the document.

Available from the producer: The Reading Network, Grande Prairie Regional College

SECTION TWO

GENERAL RESOURCE MATERIALS

Duesterbeck, F., & Veeman, N. (1991). Literacy materials produced in Saskatchewan: A bibliography. Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan Literacy Network.

This annotated bibliography lists literacy materials produced in Saskatchewan. It includes materials for use by new readers, tutors, and instructors. The annotations summarize the content and note the reading level of each citation. While the materials are not geared specifically toward older adults, they would be useful for program development and, with some adaptation, for senior literacy learners.

Available through the Saskatchewan Provincial Library

Gabriel Dumont Institute. (1991). Literacy for Metis and non-status Indian peoples: A national strategy. Regina, Saskatchewan: Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research Inc. and the Metis National Council.

A review of current literacy programs resulted in nine recommendations in relation to a national literacy strategy for Metis and non-status Indian peoples. This study also includes a list of government departments and aboriginal organizations that participated, as well as an extensive bibliography.

Available from the producer: Gabriel Dumont Institute

Hindle, J.K. (1990). Literacy learning in Saskatchewan: A review of adult literacy programs, 1989. Regina, Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan Instructional Development and Research Unit, Faculty of Education, University of Regina.

This review evaluates the structures, processes, and outcomes of fifteen literacy programs, and the effectiveness of the Saskatchewan Literacy Campaign (1987 to 1990) in increasing tutor and learner enrollments. The perspective is that of learners, tutors, and program coordinators. A profile of literacy levels in Saskatchewan, program promotion, and challenges for the future are also included.

Available from the producer: Saskatchewan Instructional Development and Research Unit, University of Regina

Saskatchewan Literacy Network. Literacy Works. Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan Literacy Network.

This quarterly journal features resources and articles, contributed by literacy practitioners, on a variety of literacy topics. The journal is designed for those working in the field and others who are concerned about literacy.

Available from the producer: Saskatchewan Literacy Network

Saskatchewan Literacy Network. On Our Way. Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan Literacy Network.

Published ten times a year, this graded-level newspaper is written by and for adult literacy learners. The "reader-friendly" paper contains current events, puzzles, feature articles and fiction. Pictures and graphics make the newspaper visually pleasing.

Available from the producer: On Our Way, c/o Saskatchewan Literacy Network

Saskatchewan Senior Citizens' Provincial Council. (1988). A study of the unmet needs of off-reserve Indian and Metis elderly in Saskatchewan. Regina, Saskatchewan: Senior Citizens' Provincial Council.

In consultation with off-reserve Indian and Metis older adults, researchers examined the life situations and needs of this group, including: living arrangements; moving and migration histories; housing; health profile; the use of formal and informal care services; the use of long-term care facilities; transportation and activity patterns. An overview of the problems faced by the Indian and Metis population is also included. Most useful to the study of older adult literacy needs and programming is the chapter on educational and language skills and resources of Indian and Metis older adults. A 1989 supplement to the original study draws conclusions and makes recommendations on how communities and service providers can help meet the needs of this group who have remained on the periphery of service development and educational programming.

Available from: Gabriel Dumont Institute library and the public library system

SECTION THREE

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